Strategy Research Project

AN ANALYSIS OF AFRICA COMMAND'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

BY

COMMANDER DAVID P. SANDERS
United States Navy

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

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by

Commander David P. Sanders
United States Navy

Colonel Thomas Sheperd
Project Adviser

U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

This Strategy Research Project is an investigation of Africa Command's (AFRICOM) organizational structure. AFRICOM was recently established and it possesses a non-traditional organizational structure designed to enhance inter-agency coordination and shape the African environment. The investigation of AFRICOM's organizational structure explores Africa's cultural climate and continental challenges, examines the inter-agency and other regional partners (United Nations, African Union and African Regional Economic Communities), and reviews AFRICOM's mission and tasks with an eye toward optimal command structure. The researcher contends that Africa command's structure and resources are not optimized for the dynamic and exceptionally diverse states that characterize the region.

AN ANALYSIS OF AFRICA COMMAND'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

On 11 July, 2009 President Barrack Obama laid out his vision for U.S. efforts in Africa during a speech in Ghana - "I will focus on four areas that are critical to the future of Africa and the entire developing world: democracy; opportunity; health; and peaceful resolution to conflict."[1] The U.S military organization with geographic responsibility for Africa is U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM).[2] An examination of AFRICOM's organization and tasks is appropriate given its recent stand-up and our growing interests in the region. The goal of this paper is to explore AFRICOM's organizational structure with an eye for improvements by utilizing contemporary organizational theory. The question this paper seeks to answer is "can AFRICOM be better structured to accomplish its mission?" We will answer this question by examining the environment that AFRICOM seeks to influence, the tasks that AFRICOM must conduct to complete its mission and the organizations it must work with to succeed.

On February 2007 President Bush announced the stand up of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)[3] reflecting the increasing importance of Africa to the U.S. both as an economic partner (up to 25% of U.S. oil will be imported from Africa by 2015)[4] and as a potential security threat (ungoverned/under-governed regions enable terrorist and criminal activity). Additionally, the U.S. Government has a compelling moral interest in reducing the suffering of Africans threatened by starvation and violence, and avoiding incidents of large scale genocide such as 1994's Rwanda. Furthermore, U.S. interests in Africa are constantly evolving and likely to intensify. As Africa develops, her countries will become valued business partners for those states fortunate enough to have well

established trade relationships in the region. Thus, the summation of these effects makes a compelling argument for characterizing U.S. national interests in Africa as important and growing.[5]

AFRICOM is unique among geographic combatant commands in that it was envisioned to be a command focused on theater security cooperation and capacity building. This mission emphasis is clearly delineated in the December 2008 Unified Command Plan – "building partner operational and institutional capacity at the country and regional levels, and, when appropriate, supporting the efforts of other U.S. government agencies active in the AOR." [6] This mission emphasis recognizes the essential challenges associated with U.S. interests in Africa – namely, that many sub-Saharan countries are politically unstable, that sizeable areas of many African countries are ungoverned or under-governed, and that past efforts and partnerships have been largely ineffective in resolving these challenges. Consequently, to realize President Obama's vision, AFRICOM's structure should be adapted to address the region's unique governmental, cultural and demographic characteristics.

Environment

Africa, as a region, is cursed by a range of complex and negative traits. These traits can be divided into those that directly impact AFRICOM (i.e. those that influence military professionalism or result in traditional military missions) and traits that engender conflict. The chief trait that AFRICOM's structure must account for is Africa's widespread lack of "good governance." Virtually every sub-Saharan African nation faces significant governance challenges. For example, Cote D'Ivoire – a "model" state with well established democratic institutions and a history of stability and economic vitality - quickly descended into civil war in 2002 following two coups in 1999 and 2001.[7] Poor

governance is the principal challenge to U.S. interests in Africa as it leads to political instability, conflict and an increased potential for military intervention - all key concerns for U.S., and hence AFRICOM, leaders.

Poor governance has enduring consequences for the militaries of many African nations. Many sub-Saharan African nations are burdened with a patrimonial system of governance. The patrimonial system is a system of governance wherein those in power appoint friends and family to key governmental positions and then distribute national resources to these officials in an effort to develop and retain loyalty. Key features of the patrimonial system are that coercive force is often used to support the government, that military personnel are recruited from constituencies deemed loyal, and that the government closely controls military forces. Eboe Hutchful highlights the patrimonial nature of African militaries in his article "Military Policy and Reform" - "In many African armies and security forces, informal links and structures of power based on such factors as ethnic, family and political connections, count for more than formal hierarchy and lines of command."[8]

One consequence of the patrimonial system is that Africans tend to fear and distrust their military/police forces, a distrust that is perpetuated by a continuing disregard for human rights within African military forces - even in countries that have transitioned to democracy. Human Rights Watch, in their report "Rein in the Soldiers" documents recent abuses of civilians by the Guinean military.[9] Additionally, the Human Rights Watch homepage has links to human rights abuses in 23 other African countries with most abuses conducted by militaries, security forces, police forces or militias.[10]

Clearly, the problem of abusive and unfair militaries is widespread and has implications for state stability.

There are many additional environmental factors that tend to destabilize African nations. These factors include ungoverned regions, poorly controlled borders, high birth rates, disease (especially malaria and HIV/Aids), water scarcity, desertification, globalization and urbanization. AFRICOM directly contributes in some of these areas (i.e. HIV program for African military readiness and well drilling initiatives).[11] AFRICOM's main efforts, however, are appropriately centered on two mission areas – Building Partnership Capacity (BPC) and Theater Security Cooperation (TSC).

AFRICOM Mission and tasks

As stated earlier, AFRICOM was envisioned to be an organization engaged in security cooperation and capacity building activities. It is commonly accepted that military organizations can indirectly influence stability through these types of activities: "Traditional Theater Security Cooperation is …meant to develop relationships that will enable U.S. military cooperation to resolve future crises."[12] Current AFRICOM TSC and BPC initiatives include military exercises and military to military (mil to mil) contact programs; additionally AFRICOM manages Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs for the Department of State (DoS).[13] These military-centric initiatives fall squarely into the paradigm of traditional COCOM missions. Accordingly, there are well defined and effective relationships between AFRICOM, the Department of Defense (DoD) and the DoS to perform these types of initiatives - FMS, FMF and IMET program management and staffing are funded by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. [14]

Earlier, this paper highlighted the instability engendered by African military misconduct. Consequently, the "professionalization" (defined in this paper as technically proficient militaries that abide by the commonly accepted laws of war) will aid state stability in Africa. AFRICOM can play a valuable role in "professionalizing" African militaries through its BPC programs. Military exercises, liaison opportunities, and mil to mil exchanges provide valuable opportunities to influence African military leaders and their troops. Given Cummings and Worley's assertion that organization change is best effected through organizational leadership; AFRICOM should focus its BPC efforts on developing the leadership of African militaries.[15] The intended effect is improved state stability advanced by proficient and humane African militaries. U.S. military planners are fairly comfortable in developing BPC programs based on their extensive operational and planning experience. Nevertheless, AFRICOM's military mission planners still require significant inter-agency coordination based on the environment's novel missions and the need to navigate the complex landscape associated with 53 dynamic and culturally complex nations.

AFRICOM, more so than other COCOMS, has ventured into areas such as Humanitarian Assistance (HA) and HIV/AIDS programs.[16] The emphasis on roles traditionally served by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the inter-agency is appropriate given AFRICOM's resources and the interconnected nature of disease, poverty and instability. AFRICOM, however, must be careful to coordinate its initiatives within the inter-agency. The problems impacting U.S. national interests in Africa fall predominantly into the domain of state building/institution building and are best accomplished through diplomacy, developmental assistance and strategic

communications. The State Department, the United States Agency for International

Development (USAID) and the public affairs elements of U.S. Agencies working in

Africa are primarily responsible for achieving U.S. national goals in Africa.

Correspondingly, AFRICOM should be structured to effectively collaborate with the U.S.

agencies (whole of government approach) and other organizations that impact the

African environment.

<u>Roles of U.S. Governmental Agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations and the</u>
<u>United Nations</u>

The whole of government approach is defined as "an approach that integrates

the collaborative efforts of the departments and agencies of the U.S. Government to

achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal."[17] The scope, complexity and severity of

African challenges highlighted in the background section of this paper coupled with

President Obama's focus areas (democracy; opportunity; health; and the peaceful

resolution of conflict)[18] dictates a "whole of government approach" and a major, if not

leading, role for the State Department in Africa. Given that military resources will be

constrained by ongoing conflicts and that the Obama Administration emphasizes

diplomatic solutions for conflict resolution, the State Department (in coordination with

the National Security Council and Office of the Secretary of Defense) is the agency of

choice to establish regional priorities and align U.S. efforts.

Establishing broad policy and priorities for regional engagement (i.e. "strategic

alignment") will address a recurring problem for U.S. initiatives in Africa. Historically,

U.S. efforts have been disjointed and ill-coordinated – "the major problem with

attempting to reach these objectives in Africa is that efforts are usually not mutually

enforced or properly coordinated among the Department of Defense, the Department of

State, or other important U.S. Governmental Agencies."[19] Currently, the Unified
Command Plan (UCP) and the Guidance for the Employment of Forces (GEF) provide
broad guidance for Combatant Commanders' Theater Security Cooperation (TSC)
efforts. This guidance is appropriately scoped and aligned with U.S. government policy.
Nevertheless, broad written guidance cannot account for the dynamic nature of African
society. Thus the State Department, with its intrinsic knowledge of complex social,
political and economic condition and trends, can play a significant role in improving
responsiveness and aligning U.S. efforts in Africa.

The State Department's African regional bureau is almost perfectly tailored for
synchronization of actions with AFRICOM. The African bureau is responsible for the
same African states as AFRICOM with the exception of Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and
Morocco[20] – nations that currently are not the main concern for AFRICOM in any case.
AFRICOM will need to work with the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
to ensure that actions for these three nations are aligned and coordinated with other
U.S. Government actions in the region. Overall, AFRICOM's theater security
cooperation efforts can benefit from the tailored approaches and regional perspectives
developed by the African and Near Eastern Affairs Bureaus.

Given the scarcity of resources and that the "big picture" State Department
structure already exists, U.S. national interests are best served if the State
Department's regional bureaus are involved in the development and prioritization of
AFRICOM's future large scale, non-combat, initiatives. For example, the African
Regional Bureau is involved in developing and prioritizing the efforts of the highly
successful African Partnership Station (APS) in collaboration with AFRICOM naval

planners, other inter-agency representatives and over 20 African countries.[21] This collaborative planning process is almost identical to the models of ideal espoused in current organization theory.[22]

Contemporary organization theory proposes such a "strategic management" relationship between collaborating organizations.[23] Such an arrangement could prevent embarrassing or ill-conceived initiatives for AFRICOM. For example, AFRICOM was criticized for including Gabonese military forces in Operation Endeavor, a twenty-two nation interoperability and communications exercise, despite the alleged election fraud and violence that followed Gabon's August 2009 election.[24] With large scale initiatives properly aligned and scoped, AFRICOM would be free to coordinate individual missions with the inter-agency.

One approach to achieving "strategic alignment" is to employ a senior State Department civilian as the lead planner for all of AFRICOM's significant initiatives. This action, however, is unlikely due to the shortage of Foreign Service Officers. Absent such reorganization, "strategic alignment" could be improved by modifying the recently published Theater Campaign Plan (TCP) and changing it into a combined State Department – AFRICOM regional engagement plan. The new regional engagement plan would be modeled on the joint State Department-USAID five year developmental assistance plan that was recently published.[25]

A consequence of AFRICOM's programs in Africa is that they can negatively impact other inter-agency actors – especially the State Department. This belief is voiced by the Tran-African forum in their June 2008 policy brief "The creation of … U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) takes the flawed "aid for security" paradigm to new and even

further flawed heights, TransAfrica Forum is opposed to the militarization of U.S. diplomacy and foreign aid on the African Continent."[26] AFRICOM should be keenly aware that it is often better resourced and quicker to act than other agencies. This mismatch of mission and resources generates the perception that AFRICOM is the "agency of choice" for African political leaders. This harmful perception may steer African civilian leaders to directly contact AFRICOM for assistance with humanitarian assistance projects leading to a de facto militarization of U.S. policy. Encouraging the proper flow of requests and information preserves the State Department's status and authority, and prevents the militarization of U.S. African policy. Therefore, AFRICOM's organizational structure needs strong connections with all embassies and missions in its AOR.

A key State Department organization that AFRICOM will need to coordinate actions with is the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). The S/CRS has been tasked by the Secretary of State to accomplish three wide-ranging tasks: Developing a civilian response capability, developing a whole-of-government response to stability operations, and ensuring civilian-military integration.[27] Based on the tasks given to S/CRS by the Secretary of State, AFRICOM will be a key partner for S/CRS due to the likely need for stability operations in response to conflict prompted by poor governance and environmental factors. Notably, the civilian response capability task was accomplished through the establishment of the Civilian Response Corps (CRC).

The CRC, established as part of the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act (signed into law in October 2008)[28], is a unique organization developed in response to

the conspicuous need for civilian stabilization and reconstruction expertise. The CRC is

envisioned to have a full-time 250 person component, a 2,000 person standby

component (Federal employees with other jobs in the inter-agency) and 500 member

reserve component (state, local and private sector professionals).[29] The role for which

the CRC was envisioned is typically post-conflict scenarios or humanitarian assistance

operations. The 2009 Weak States index paints a grim picture of African instability and

the likelihood of future conflict – only nine of fifty-three nations fall into a "borderline" or

better category.[30] It is likely then, that many of the CRC's missions will be conducted in

AFRICOM's AOR, either to support post-conflict stabilization or to improve governance

and infrastructure in needy countries. AFRICOM's and the CRC's relationship will be

mutually supportive with AFRICOM serving as a force multiplier for the CRC during non-

conflict scenarios and the CRC serving as a force multiplier for AFRICOM during post

military conflict scenarios. At this time there is one CRC liaison officer attached to

AFRICOM reflecting the importance of a strong, working relationship between

AFRICOM and the CRC.[31]

The most important State Department – AFRICOM relationship is between the

AFRICOM staff and the individual embassy country teams. The building blocks of the

State Department are embassies and consulates, whose staffs possess valuable local

expertise, enjoy key relationships (government, regional organizations, business and

non-governmental organizations) and have institutional knowledge vital to AFRICOM's

success. Four decades of French military experience in Africa highlights the importance

of cultural savoir-faire in Africa. Colonel Henri Bore, French Army, states "It takes time

to understand and learn about a foreign culture and to then determine how to apply the

knowledge gained to all types of military operations. The sooner young French leaders learn about Africa, the more confident, and ultimately more successful they are."[32] Accordingly, Embassies and consulates are vital resources that can assist AFRICOM staff and military forces in navigating the complex, invisible and pervasive web of African social relationships inherent in patrimonial societies. AFRICOM staff must develop strong relationships with embassy/consulate staff in order to effectively plan and execute missions. Finally, international norms dictate that ambassadors and embassy diplomats coordinate many of the actions that AFRICOM will carry out in Africa.

Another key partner for AFRICOM is USAID. USAID plays a vital role in achieving U.S. national goals in Africa as the organization responsible for developmental assistance – thereby addressing many of the root causes of instability. USAID is organized into over 11 bureaus and six offices of which two bureaus (Bureau for Africa and the bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian assistance)[33] have clear links to AFRICOM's mission. USAID's geographic organization does not align with AFRICOM's. USAID's office of Middle East Countries has responsibility for Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia.[34] USAID, however, is manpower limited with only 2,000 Foreign Service and Civil Service staff[35]. Therefore, military operations (typically logistics for humanitarian assistance) conducted in support of USAID will be managed by a skeletal USAID staff. Currently AFRICOM has one USAID representative on staff. Given USAID's limited manpower, the current organizational relationship is appropriate. Nevertheless, the geographic mismatch between AFRICOM, USAID and the State Department will complicate coordination as illustrated by the following anecdote:

"During a "hearts and minds" mission in the city of Nema a couple of years ago, U.S. special forces built the clinic in coordination with the local ministry of defense, but that's where the consultations ended. With no local U.S. Agency for International Development officials on the ground to provide the regional political and social context, the clinic was built on military land restricted from public use. Now, the facilities remain vacant and unused."[36]

Long term U.S. success in Africa is greatly facilitated by a positive national image: arguably, the ideal African end state is a peaceful, prosperous and democratic continent friendly to the U.S. This end state is impossible to achieve without an effective strategic communications program. Consequently, AFRICOM's senior leaders must be acutely aware of how U.S. military initiatives will be perceived. Major initiatives such as the establishment of AFRICOM and the search for a continental AFRICOM headquarters require significant socialization with African partners before implementation. Both of the aforementioned initiatives suffered due to strategic communications missteps as evinced by the following quote from a State Department Official: "We've got a big image problem down there. Public opinion is really against getting in bed with the U.S. They just don't trust the U.S."[37] Future initiatives require strategic messages tailored for regional and national as well as private audiences (diplomat to diplomat, and mil to mil), discussions before public broadcast. Currently, AFRICOM's public affairs office is functionally organized with personnel dedicated to various outreach efforts (i.e. AFRICOM website, blogs etc).[38] To be most effective, AFRICOM public affairs officers should be geographically organized in order to develop long-term working relationships with African media and to gain familiarity with local

viewpoints. Country teams, again, are an invaluable resource for AFRICOM's public affairs officers.

NGOs are a potential resource for AFRICOM. NGOs often develop long term relationships with estranged populations – many of whom are often actively engaged in conflict. Understandably, NGOs choose to avoid the appearance of working with the military or government as demonstrated by the following observation in a Voice of America report "NGOs… fear that AFRICOM will result in U.S. aid to Africa becoming "militarized," and that they'll be in danger if they're seen to be working closely with the U.S. military in sensitive areas, such as conflict zones."[39] However, NGOs and AFRICOM can still develop mutually beneficial connections without a formal relationship. The key to building relationships with NGOs will be to demonstrate, via action, the willingness to assist in humanitarian projects and the wholesome values of U.S. forces. AFRICOM's NGO outreach efforts have born little fruit - although the U.S. Navy did deliver supplies to Liberia on behalf of Project Hope.[40] NGOs may be most receptive to AFRICOM involvement if AFRICOM's outreach representatives are civilians thereby limiting the appearance of "militarization" of humanitarian efforts and promoting the perception of impartiality and neutrality for NGO workers.

Historically, the United Nations (UN) has been the organization of choice for African intervention with 19 successful peacekeeping missions completed.[41] The UN currently has seven peacekeeping missions in Africa totaling nearly 60,000 military troops (MINURSO, MONUC, UNMIL, UNOCI, UNMIS, UNAMID, MINURCAT, and BINUB).[42] One negative aspect of UN peacekeeping missions is their lack of timeliness – "based on past experience (notably in 1994 in Rwanda) … time is of the essence if

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one is to prevent an emerging crisis from degenerating into a catastrophe. Under the

UN peacekeeping structure, it takes on average three to six months from the time the

UN Security Council decides to establish a peacekeeping mission until it is able to

deploy such a mission. During this time period, lives may be lost while the conflict

escalates and spills over into neighboring regions."[43] Currently, the U.S. contributes

troops to two of these missions (UNMIL and MINURCAT). AFRICOM planners and

intelligence personnel will need to build strong relationships with UN planners in order to

harmonize operations and coordinate efforts. Given the nature of peacekeeping

operations and the likelihood of additional instability, AFRICOM will need to keep close

tabs on peacekeeping missions. At present, AFRICOM has no observers on staff on

any of these peacekeeping missions.[44] Consideration should be given to placing an

observer on staff at each peacekeeping mission and the Africa division of the UN

Peacekeeping staff.

The Role of the African Union and Regional Economic Communities

Another important partner for AFRICOM is the African Union (AU). The AU is an

especially relevant actor due to its legitimacy among the African people. The AU was

conceived and founded by Africans as an organization focused on solving Africa's

problems. The AU is modeled on the UN and is currently the only continent-wide

organization capable of addressing wide-scale concerns. Of note, Morocco is not a

member of the African Union.[45]

The AU is a successor to the now defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU)

and has a significantly different vision than its predecessor. Whereas the OAU was

focused on promoting unity among African nations and the principle of non-interference,

the AU is focused on the economic and social advancement of Africans and the

principle of non-indifference (a direct outcome of the Rwandan genocide).[46] In keeping with these principles, the AU recognizes the importance of military support as evinced in the AU vision statement: "As a continental organization it focuses on the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent as a prerequisite for the implementation of the development and integration agenda of the Union."[47]

The AU is a relatively new organization, officially launched in Durban, South Africa on 9 July 2002, and has made significant progress toward becoming a continental authority for dispute resolution despite only seven years of existence. The AU's Peace and Security Council is the organ tasked with the resolution of disputes and prevention of conflict. Member states of the AU have come to a general agreement that African Regional Economic Communities (REC) should establish African standby brigades as part of a total African Standby Force (ASF).

Standby brigades are envisioned to be regional forces that are reserved for peacekeeping, stability or humanitarian assistance missions. The African Union Roadmap on Common Defence and Security Programme calls for the stand-up of five regional brigades in North, South, East, West and Central Africa.[48] To date, brigades have been "formed" in Eastern (not affiliated with a REC); Western (Economic Community of West African States); Southern (South Africa Development Community) and Central (Economic Community of Central African States) Africa – no progress has been made on a North African standby brigade. At present, AFRICOM has a liaison serving with the Western Africa Standby Force; has presidential determinations supporting liaison with the Southern Standby Force and is seeking presidential determinations for the remaining standby forces.[49]

These brigades are still in their infancy – there is much work to be done in the areas of command & control, equipment and training before these forces are fully effective. Notably, these units will be modeled upon UN forces (primarily the Standby Force High Readiness Brigade) "The African Standby Force will be trained to UN standards under UN doctrine - Training should be conducted according to UN doctrine and standards, and should draw on the available training materials, training aids and courses available through the UN system."[50] Thus, any training support from AFRICOM should account for difference in US and UN doctrine. The AU envisions receiving significant international assistance for the training of the ASF "the Union and Regions have benefited from other financial and material assistance programmes such as the ACRI (US), RECAMP (France), as well as support from the British (BPST), Norwegian, Canadian, Danish and other Nordic countries."[51]

The aforementioned international organizations, agencies and NGOs play important roles on the African continent and successful collaboration with these entities is essential to U.S. success. Successful collaboration, in turn, requires established relationships, authorities and division of labour. This is where organizational structure can have important effect. You can still get the job done structured differently but it may not provide the best effect or it may be less efficient.
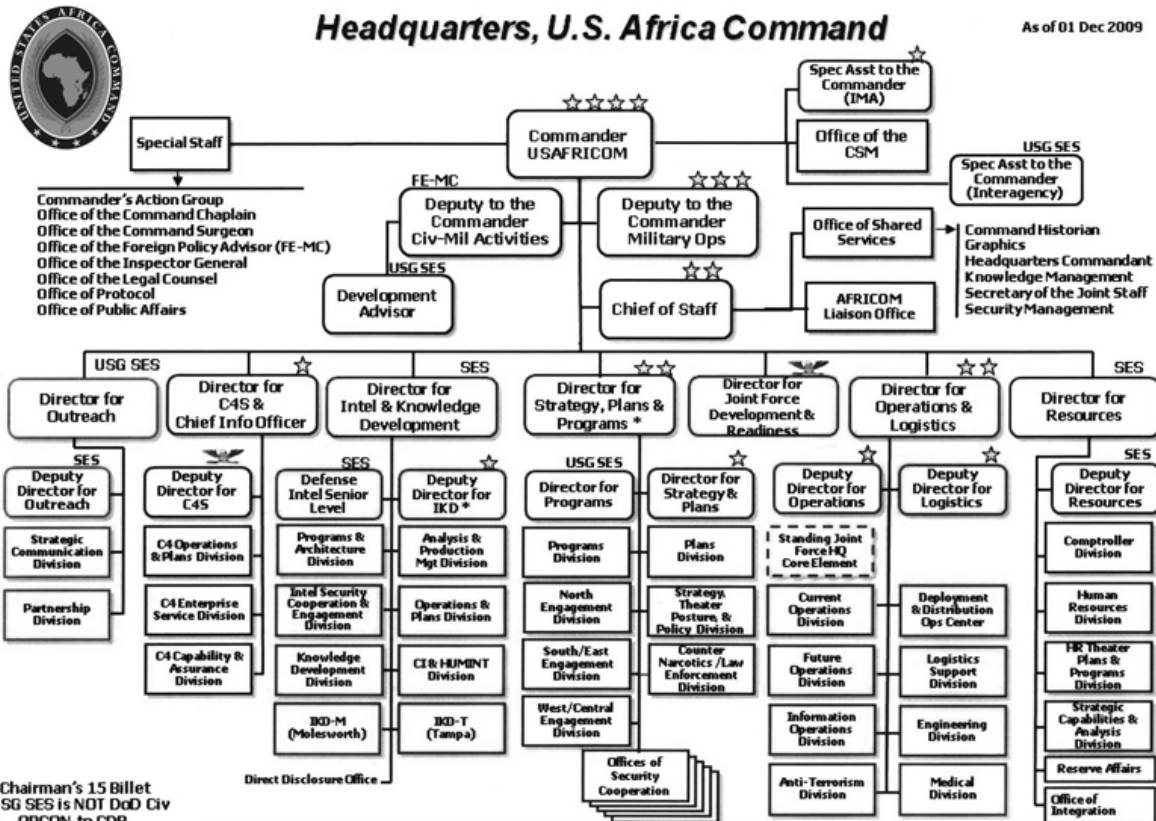
Figure 1.

AFRICOM's Current Organizational Structure and Inter-Agency Manning Concerns

AFRICOM's structure was developed to promote joint, interagency and even private- and public-sector cooperation.[52] To accomplish this goal, AFRICOM's Headquarters was organized into seven functionally aligned directorates (Outreach; C4S & Chief Information Officer; Intelligence and Knowledge Development; Strategy Plans and Programs; Joint Force Development and Readiness; Operations & Logistics; Resources) - see AFRICOM's organizational chart (figure 1) for reference during the discussion of AFRICOM's structure. Three of these divisions are internally focused (C4S, Joint Force Development and Resources) and thus require no additional amplification. The four remaining divisions merit closer examination.

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The Outreach directorate is composed of two divisions (Strategic Communications and Partnership). The Partnership division must align AFRICOM's partnership building efforts with U.S. regional strategies and the Strategic Communications division must craft messages that resonate with the intended audiences. To accomplish these tasks, these divisions must conduct extensive coordination with external entities (State Department, IGOs, NGOs, Foreign National press & military personnel) and internal entities (other AFRICOM divisions). The Outreach directorate encompasses two tightly related functions and seeks to influence events in the mid to long term future.

The Intelligence and Knowledge Development (IKD) directorate plays an important organizational role. Successful organizations require "feedback" mechanisms in order to evaluate organizational effectiveness.[53] Although not traditionally viewed in this manner, intelligence divisions (and in AFRICOM's case the IKD directorate) serve this function. At this time the IKD directorate is physically located in a building a significant distance from the other AFRICOM directorates.[54] This separation complicates coordination with other AFRICOM directorates. To accomplish its functions, the IKD directorate must gather information from sources external to AFRICOM and disseminate it to sources within AFRICOM (primarily the Strategy, Plans & Programs and Operations and Logistics directorates).

The Strategy, Plans & Programs (SP&P) directorate develops plans aligned with U.S. government policy.[55] The SP&P directorate can be characterized as AFRICOM's long-range planning element. To be successful, the divisions within the SP&P directorate must conduct extensive coordination internal and external to AFRICOM. The

primary external organizations for coordination are State Department Country Teams, U.S. AID, the Joint Staff J-5 directorate and Office of the Secretary Defense Policy directorate. The SP&P directorate contains five Regional Integration Teams (RIT) aligned with AU regional organizations. These RITs are composed of regional experts (health, military, cultural, command and control) who are tasked to provide linkage with the AU, AU regional organizations and US AID support hubs.[56] The SP&P directorate conducts extensive internal coordination with the IKD, Operations & Logistics and Resources directorates. The internal relationship between the IKD and SP&P directorates needs to be especially robust given the long-term perspective of the SP&P in order to enable refinement and adjustment of SP&P plans.

The final AFRICOM directorate is the Operations & Logistics (O&L) directorate. This directorate conducts current operations and plans for near term operations. Ongoing operations are conducted by several divisions within the O&L directorate (i.e. the current operations, logistics, anti-terrorism and information operations divisions). These divisions require flexibility and agility in the form of decision making authority and the permission to coordinate with partners in order to deal with events as they unfold.[57] The O&L directorate is functionally aligned to include medical and engineering divisions in addition to the aforementioned divisions. The O&L directorate is, in essence, the AFRICOM section that directs component command forces in the field - AFRICOM's commander considers the O&L directorate to be the locus of effort for executing on-going operations.[58]

One significant difficulty that AFRICOM faces within its organization is the dearth of inter-agency civilians. Initially, AFRICOM had planned for 125 inter-agency civilian

positions but later cut that goal down to 52.[59] This reduced goal has not yet been

achieved with only 25 inter-agency civilians on board as of 31 December 2009 (less

than 3% of AFRICOM Headquarters staff).[60] Clearly, the inter-agency synergy built into

the original AFRICOM organizational plan has failed to materialize. It is unlikely that

AFRICOM can attain more inter-agency civilians due to severe manning shortfalls within

these agencies (DoS has a 25% shortfall in mid-level managers).[61] With AFRICOM's

basic organization and civilian manning examined, it is appropriate to investigate

Organizational theory and its applications to AFRICOM.

Organizational Theory

This paper seeks to investigate AFRICOM's organizational design in terms of two

separate but interrelated concepts – internal organizational design and external

environment. First, internal organizational design and its applications to AFRICOM will

be examined. Next, external organizational theory, will be explored as it applies to

AFRICOM's environment and partnerships.

Contemporary business theory classifies internal organization structure into three

groupings that are relevant to AFRICOM – functional, divisional and horizontal.[62]

Functional grouping is preferred for organizations whose mission involves repetitive

tasks or require in-depth knowledge. Within AFRICOM, the Command, Control,

Communications and Computers (C4) systems are good examples of tasks that benefit

from functional grouping. Fittingly, AFRICOM has functionally organized the C4 systems

and IKD directorates.[63] Another organizational model, horizontal grouping is the logical

choice for AFRICOM's Outreach directorate. Horizontal groups are organized by core

work processes and provide "one stop shopping" for customers. Utilizing a horizontal

structure for outreach programs improves the directorate's effectiveness by reducing the inter-agency and African partner coordination requirements.

The third relevant organizational model, the divisional model, combines multiple functional tasks (repeated in other divisions) under the umbrella of a larger organizational department. The divisional model is suited to rapid change in uncertain environments, enables coordination across functions and decentralizes decision making. A subset of the divisional model is geographic grouping – perfect for AFRICOM's cooperative security mission.[64]

AFRICOM's SP & P directorate falls under the divisional model with its geographic grouping. SP&P's organization is a good example of selecting an organizational construct to optimize the organization for one role. The Divisional model is appropriate considering SP & P's need for coordination across functions. The SP&P directorate does not, however, require the decentralized decision making and flexibility that this model provides.

AFRICOM's O & L directorate is an example of an organization that could benefit from some additional reorganization. The O & L directorate is currently organized under the divisional model – the correct model considering the O & L directorate's extensive coordination requirements and need for quick decision making. The O & L directorate, however, could use the additional focus provided by a geography based re-organization tailored to the African Standby Brigades (i.e. North, South, East, West and Central Africa subdivisions). This re-organization is appropriate and would enable improved coordination internal and external to AFRICOM as well as improved regional expertise and relationships. Internal organizational structure is only one piece of the

organizational design process - to be effective, organizations also need to be optimized for their environment.

Recent thinking in organizational theory reflects lessons learned from globalization. To be successful in today's unstable and constantly evolving environment requires innovation and flexibility - businesses falter or fail if they are slow to adapt. Geographic Combatant Commanders are similarly challenged by the increasingly dynamic and interconnected world in which we live. Globalization stresses the populace and institutions within an AOR and constantly changes the relationship between state and non-state actors. GCC's, however, require stable and well defined relationships with international and inter-agency partners for optimal effectiveness. Therefore, the best possible organizational structure for AFRICOM balances the need for established supra-governmental, non-governmental and inter-agency relationships (to develop long term strategic effect) with the need for adaptability in the complex and evolving AFRICAN environment (to achieve near-term objectives).

Organizations that are optimized for stable environments and efficient performance fall under the "mechanical system" paradigm.[65] Characteristics of these types of organizations include a well defined vertical structure, rigid cultures, formal systems and routine tasks. Military units are classic examples of mechanical systems – the clearly defined hierarchies, authorities and processes ensure alignment of effort and facilitate interoperability. Thus, AFRICOM's relationships with supra-ordinate and subordinate commands should predominately follow the mechanical system paradigm. As stated previously, AFRICOM's relationship with its inter-agency partners requires stability and formal processes that would be best served by this type of system. The

planning for, and management of, long-term TSC and BPC initiatives are AFRICOM

(and inter-agency) functions best suited for the "mechanical systems" model.

AFRICOM's relationship with USAID and the State Department (to include the CRC) will

benefit from the clearly defined authorities, processes and relationships that

"mechanical systems" produce. The IKD directorate is properly organized as a

"mechanical system" based on its requirement to have a well defined and developed

information gathering process. Additionally, AFRICOM's Outreach and SP&P

directorates are appropriately configured as "mechanical systems" since they serve as

the principal inter-agency, IGO and NGO coordination elements.

The "natural system" paradigm falls on the other extreme of organizational

theory. Natural systems are optimized for turbulent environments and are considered to

be "learning organizations."[66] Characteristics of "natural systems" include horizontal

structures, empowered roles, shared information, collaborative strategies and adaptive

cultures. As elaborated in the background section of this paper, Africa is a highly

complex and volatile environment - AFRICOM's organization should reflect that reality.

To be successful, these elements must adjust to the evolving African environment

through creativity and adaptability - "To cope, organizations need a shift to a new

paradigm....shifting to flexible, decentralized structures that emphasize horizontal

collaboration."[67] Therefore, the elements within AFRICOM responsible for immediate

and near term shaping activities are best served by the "natural system" paradigm - in

essence executing the plans and programs coordinated and developed by the

"mechanical systems" planning elements. The current operations, future operations,

logistics and information operations divisions within the O & L directorate fall into this

category. The ability of these divisions to conduct their mission will be significantly enhanced by the flattest possible organizational hierarchy and a prudent expansion of authorities. At this time the O & L directorate retains a sub-optimal organizational construct. AFRICOM is effectively optimized for inter-agency coordination and not for current operations.

The impact of such a sub-optimized organization construct is evident in SOUTHCOM's recent disaster relief experience. SOUTHCOM (with an organizational construct similar to AFRICOM) changed the organization of their Haiti earthquake disaster relief operation back to the traditional J-Code construct after 5 days – due, in part, to the inability of their operations and logistics elements to cope with the frenetic and evolving operations.[68] Therefore, consideration should be given to separating these four divisions from the O & L directorate and having them report directly to the director for Operations and Logistics.

Recommendations and Findings

Recommendations and findings determined in this paper are summarized below in bullet format:

- A major task that AFRICOM will need to assume is the "professionalization" of African militaries.

- AFRICOM's resource constrained "professionalization" efforts should be directed towards the leadership of African militaries.

- To best effect "professionalization" AFRICOM should be organized to seek and support frequent multi-national military exercises and liaison opportunities.

- AFRICOM should utilize the State Department to introduce major TSC, BPC and humanitarian assistance initiatives.

- AFRICOM should consider developing an African regional engagement plan in tandem with the State Department.

- Requests for military assistance generated by African governments should be routed through embassies/consulates to prevent a perceived "militarization" of foreign policy –provided that embassies/consulates have the capacity to support the workload.

- AFRICOM should utilize inter-agency civilians, if available, for NGO outreach and coordination.

- AFRICOM should consider placing observers on staff at UN peacekeeping mission in Africa.

- AFRICOM should consider placing liaison officers at each African Standby Force Headquarters once presidential determinations support such connections.

- AFRICOM should seek formal commitments from its inter-agency partners for personnel or develop other methods to obtain inter-agency perspectives if inter-agency personnel are not on staff due to resource constraints.

- AFRICOM should pursue a common facility to enhance coordination among geographically separated directorates.

- AFRICOM's Operations and logistics directorate (current operations, future operations, information operations and logistics divisions only) would benefit from geography based re-organization tied to African Standby forces.

- AFRICOM's Operations and logistics directorate's hierarchy should be "flattened" to the maximum extent possible and a prudent expansion of decision making authorities and coordination permissions should be considered.

Conclusion

Africa is a complex and dynamic environment fraught with overwhelming challenges for its constituent nations. AFRICOM was launched to shape the African environment in order to promote stability and protect the U.S. government's important and growing regional interests. To accomplish these missions, AFRICOM developed an innovative, non-traditional, headquarters organization designed to improve coordination with its inter-agency, IGO, NGO and regional governmental partners. This paper evaluated AFRICOM's organizational structure seeking to answer the question "Is AFRICOM optimally organized for its mission and environment?" in light of contemporary organization theory.

AFRICOM's mission is to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy. To accomplish its mission AFRICOM must conduct TSC and BPC activities in coordination with inter-agency and regional partners. These activities include military exercises, liaison opportunities, and mil to mil exchanges that provide valuable opportunities to "professionalize" African militaries. Additionally, the ailing African environment dictates that AFRICOM must conduct significant HA/DR missions.

AFRICOM's mission success, in turn, depends heavily on its many partnerships. Key interagency partnerships include the DoS and US AID. Effective collaboration with these two agencies is critical for the U.S.'s "Diplomacy, Development and Defense"

approach in Africa. The UN, AU and NGOs are other partners that AFRICOM must engage for success in Africa. This paper concludes that AFRICOM's organizational structure is generally suited for inter-agency and partner coordination, however AFRICOM is not structured for near term operations in Africa's dynamic and diverse environment.

A review of AFRICOM's directorate reveals that the Outreach, IKD and Strategy Plans and Policy Directorates are appropriately configured for their organizational roles. The O & L directorate, however, is not optimally organized for its role. Although it is appropriately configured as a divisionally grouped, "natural system" two small reorganizations could improve its theoretical effectiveness. The first reorganization would be to group the current operations, future operations, information operations and logistics divisions together and have them report directly to the director for Operations and Logistics. Additionally, each of these divisions should be further divided into branches that correspond to the African Standby forces. These two reorganizations will improve AFRICOM's ability to plan for and respond to current and near-future operations.

AFRICOM's was organized to facilitate inter-agency and other partnerships.. Evaluation of AFRICOM's structure based on contemporary organizational theory reveals that AFRICOM is generally structured properly to accomplish its mission. AFRICOM can benefit however, from some minor reorganization and the strengthening of some collaborative relationships. These small changes, which will properly balance the mechanistic and natural system approaches to AFRICOM's organizational structure, have the potential to greatly increase AFRICOM's overall mission accomplishment

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